



**U.S. Department of Justice**

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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**MEMBER OF CRYSTAL METH OPERATION SENTENCED TO 30 YEARS IN PRISON**

PHILADELPHIA – Arthur Ishkhanian, 35, of Collegeville, Pennsylvania, was sentenced today to 30 years in prison on four counts related to a drug conspiracy involving methamphetamine, announced Acting United States Attorney Laurie Magid. Ishkhanian was one of 15 defendants charged in an August 2007 superseding indictment for a drug conspiracy involving more than 100 pounds of methamphetamine. The indictment alleged that from 2004 through April 2006, the defendants were acquiring the drugs from sources of supply in Nevada and California, shipping the drugs by tractor trailer to the Philadelphia area, then distributing the drugs through a network of distributors in the Philadelphia metropolitan area. On November 30, 2007, Ishkhanian pleaded guilty to the conspiracy, two counts of possession with intent to distribute, and one count of distributing.

Ishkhanian failed to report to prison to await sentencing on February 4, 2008. On June 17, 2008, the United States Marshals Service found and captured Ishkhanian in Pensacola, Florida. He is currently awaiting sentencing for an escape charge. At the time of his capture, Ishkhanian was in possession of false identification documents, credit cards in another name, and an appointment card for a Beverly Hills plastic surgeon.

In addition to the 30 year prison term, United States District Judge Robert Kelly ordered Ishkhanian to pay a \$25,000 fine, and complete five years of supervised release.

The case was investigated by the United States Drug Enforcement Administration ("DEA"), Philadelphia Field Division, assisted by the Philadelphia Police Department, Narcotics Strike Force, and the Philadelphia District Attorney's Office, Dangerous Drug Offenders Unit. The case has been assigned to Assistant United States Attorneys Joseph T. Labrum III and Karen M. Klotz.

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